

ISLAM

Contribute to a respectable living

By Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

To be able to lead a respectable life in society there is a very necessary condition. And that is, you must become someone who is beneficial to others, a giver, or at least a “no-problem person” as far as others are concerned. Other than these two options, there is no way for you to lead a respectable life in society. Those who think that there is a third way only go on to create trouble in society, and for themselves too.

Social existence is always based on the principle of give-and-take. If you are contributing positively to society, society will regard you with respect.

And if you think you are not in a position to contribute anything to society, at least you can become a “no-problem” person for others. The same spirit is reflected in a saying of the Prophet of Islam. He once observed: “One who creates nuisance for his neighbour is not a Muslim.” That is, one should live in society as a person from whom others do not experience problems.

If you become a giver as far as others are concerned, you are helping society progress. Even if you become simply a “no-problem” person, you are still playing a social role — by not placing any obstacle in society’s progress.

In the former case, you are directly helping society to progress. In the latter case, you are doing this indirectly.

But people who are neither givers nor “no problem” people, only become a burden on society. Although according to the conventional law these people may not be criminals, this is exactly what they actually are in terms of the etiquette of human life. Although the courts of this world will not sentence them to punishment, in the court of nature they will be considered guilty of an enormous moral crime.